CASUALTIES OF WAR

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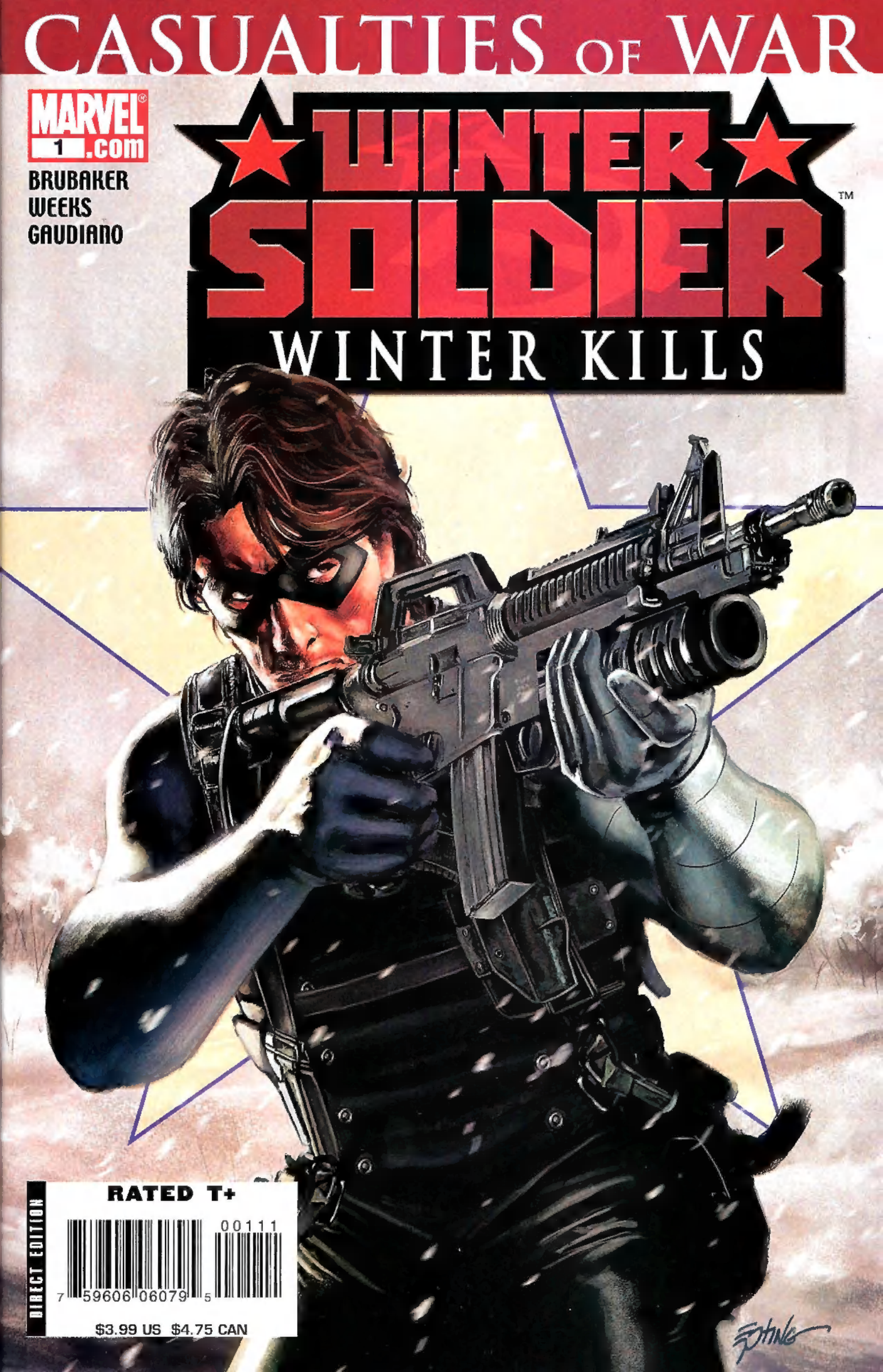
WINTER SOLDIER™

WINTER KILLS



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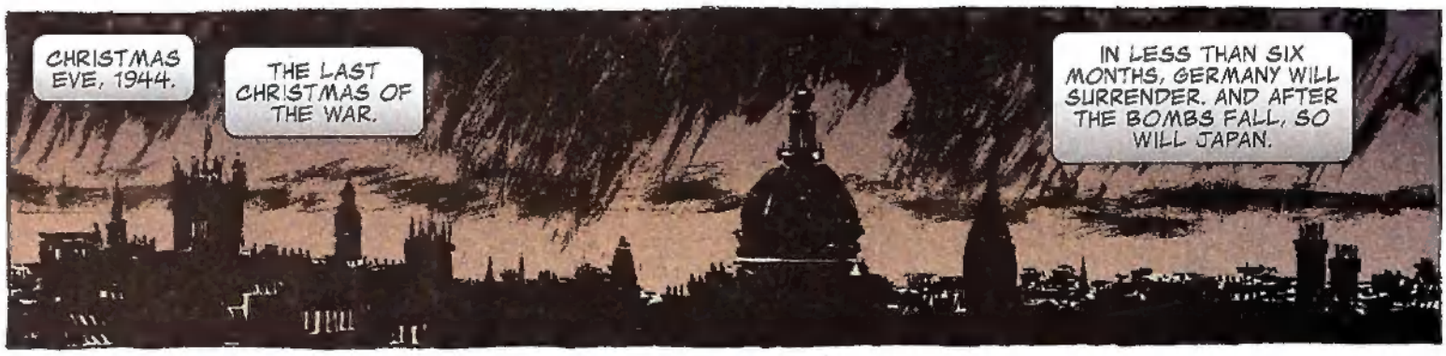
CHRISTMAS EVE, 1944.
THE LAST CHRISTMAS OF THE WAR.
IN LESS THAN SIX MONTHS, GERMANY WILL SURRENDER. AND AFTER THE BOMBS FALL, SO WILL JAPAN.

SHELTER
CAP AND ME, WE WON'T BE AROUND TO SEE IT...BUT WE DON'T KNOW THAT.
HAPPY CHRIST
MAYBE THAT'S WHAT MAKES CHRISTMAS MATTER...WE'D MADE IT THROUGH ANOTHER YEAR...

...AND IN THE BOMBED-OUT STREETS OF LONDON, THAT *ALWAYS* SEEMED LIKE SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE...
APPY CHRISTMAS
C'MON, TORO... DO YOU WANNA MISS THE WHOLE THING?

GIMME A *MINUTE*, BUCK... I'M NOT USED TO WEARING THIS *UNIFORM*...
IT'S *ITCHY*.
SORRY, PAL... BUT WE'RE NOT GETTING NEAR *ANY GIRLS* IF THEY SEE YOU WALK INTO THE DANCE IN A *BATHING SUIT*.
NOW, *MOVE IT*, SOLDIER...

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YOU COMIN', STEVE?
TO THE DANCE? NO... I'VE GOT SOME READING TO DO, LEARNING THE NEW CODES.
STEVE--IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE. TAKE A BREAK...THE WAR WILL STILL BE HERE.
AND DAMES LOVE A MAN IN UNIFORM.
YOU KIDS HAVE FUN.
BUT BE CAREFUL OUT THERE.

WHAT'S WITH YOU, NAMOR? YOU'RE ALL DRESSED UP.
I SHALL BE ATTENDING THE FESTIVITIES AT LORD FALSWORTH'S MANOR...
...WHERE, UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, THE HUMAN TORCH IS EXPECTING YOU, TORO.

I TOLD HIM BUCK AND ME HAD OTHER PLANS...
HE JUST DOESN'T REALIZE WE AREN'T KIDS ANYMORE.
BESIDES, I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T CARE ABOUT CHRISTMAS.

I DO NOT. YOUR SURFACE HOLIDAYS MEAN LESS THAN NOTHING TO ME.
SO WHY GO TO THE FALSWORTHS' PARTY?
BECAUSE THEIR CHEF EXCEEDS ALL SURFACE-WORLD STANDARDS...
...AND BECAUSE IT AMUSES ME TO WATCH THE TORCH SQUIRM WHENEVER I SPEND TIME WITH LADY JACQUELINE.
POOR PAPPY. HE MAY NOT BE FLESH AND BLOOD... BUT HE SURE IS HUMAN.
FORGET THEM, PAL... THIS IS OUR NIGHT...
JUST TWO SERVICEMEN OVERSEAS ON CHRISTMAS EVE...
LET THE LADIES FALL AT OUR FEET!
1944...THAT WAS A REAL CHRISTMAS.
THE LAST CHRISTMAS I HAD...

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NO...
THIS ISN'T CHRISTMAS.
WE MAY BE GETTING THIS WEAK EXCUSE FOR SNOW...
...AND DECORATIONS MAY BE UP AROUND THE CITY...
...BUT THE SPIRIT IS GONE.
ORIGINAL
MACCHIO'S
IT'S LIKE SOMEONE KNOCKED THE WIND OUT OF AMERICA...AND EVERYTHING IMPORTANT WENT WITH IT.
NOW THEY JUST GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS, BECAUSE NO ONE KNOWS WHAT ELSE TO DO.
BUT YOU SEE IT IN THEIR EYES...THEY'RE SCARED.
THERE'S ANOTHER WAR GOING ON, ALL AROUND THEM, BUT THEY AREN'T INVOLVED...

THEY CAN'T BE.
WHERE DO YOU STAND ON REGISTRATION?
ACTION POLL
FOR
65%
AGAINST
30%
NO STANDING
ONE WAY
BECAUSE THIS WAR IS FOUGHT BY GODS, NOT MEN.
THAT'S WHAT IT MUST FEEL LIKE...
LIKE THE WAY IT MUST'VE FELT TO THIS CITY IN 1940, WHEN THE TORCH FOUGHT NAMOR AND THEY BLEW UP AND DROWNED HALF THE BOWERY.
VIETNAM VETERAN
VET
HUNGRY
NEED FOOD
GOD BLESS!
HELPLESS.

AND IT'S HARD TO FEEL ANYTHING ELSE WHEN YOU FEEL HELPLESS.
BUT I'D EXCHANGE WHAT I FEEL FOR THAT HELPLESSNESS IN A HEARTBEAT.
A
B
D
BECAUSE CHRISTMAS FOR ME, EVER SINCE MY DAD DIED, HAS BEEN ABOUT LOOKING BACK...
...AT THE GOOD TIMES AND THE BAD, AT THINGS THAT'VE BEEN LOST...
BUT NOW, THERE'S SO MUCH BAD AND SO MANY LOST...
54 Street Broadway
EXIT
...SO MUCH GUILT...
DANGER
GOD, I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR IT TO BE 1944 AGAIN.
DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT SYSTEM

BBREEEDEL-
DEET-DEET

HELLO?
KID, I GOT A THING I NEED YOU TO--

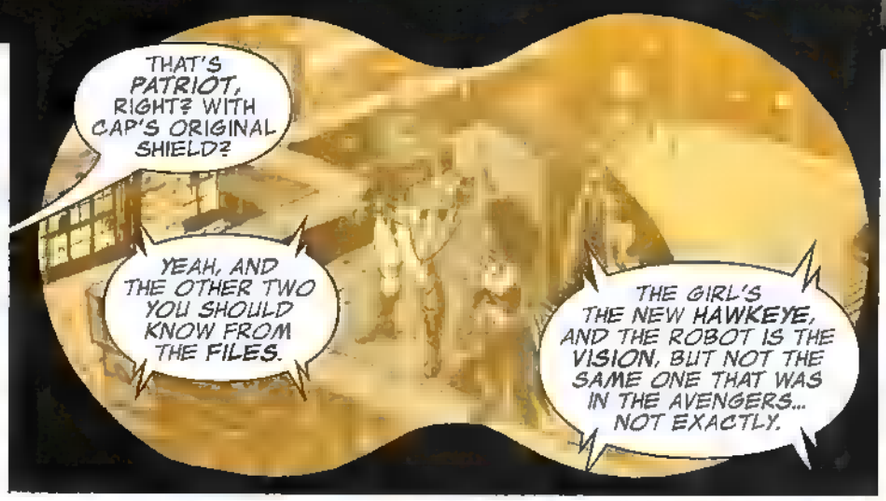
NO. I TOLD YOU THIS NIGHT WAS MINE, FURY.
I KNOW. AN' I WOULDN'T BE ASKIN', BUT IT'S IMPORTANT.
IT'S CHRISTMAS FREAKING EVE, NICK...DON'T YOU EVER TAKE A NIGHT OFF?
NOT SINCE 1952.

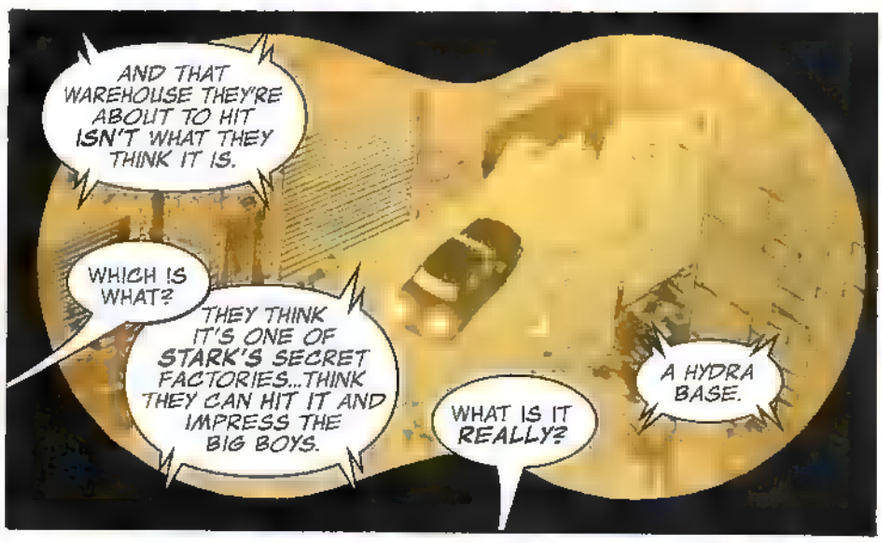
C'MON, KID, I DID YOU A SOLID, NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.
WHERE'S THAT HOLIDAY SPIRIT?

ALL RIGHT... LEMME GET OUTSIDE AND YOU CAN GIVE ME THE DETAILS...

I DON'T SEE ANYTHING, VISION... NOT EVEN ON THE THERMAL SCANS.
I ASSURE YOU IT IS THERE, KATE. THEY ARE SIMPLY MASKING ALL HEAT AND MOTION.
IT IS QUITE A SOPHISTICATED SYSTEM, IT APPEARS.
LIKE, WE CAN'T HANDLE THIS OURSELVES SOPHISTICATED?
OR, WE BETTER DO THIS FAST AND BOUNCE SOPHISTICATED?
THERE ARE INTERESTING ODDS ON EITHER SIDE OF THAT EQUATION, PATRIOT.
BUT IF I WERE FORCED TO MAKE AN ESTIMATE, I WOULD CHOOSE THE LATTER.
WHAT?
HE SAID WE HIT 'EM FAST AND RUN.
WHAT, CAN'T YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?
YEAH, BUT NOT OLDE ENGLISH.

FURY... WHAT THE HELL IS THIS? THEY'RE KIDS.
YEAH, KIDS WHO'RE ABOUT TO WRECK MONTHS OF WORK.


THAT'S PATRIOT, RIGHT? WITH CAP'S ORIGINAL SHIELD?
YEAH, AND THE OTHER TWO YOU SHOULD KNOW FROM THE FILES.
THE GIRL'S THE NEW HAWKEYE, AND THE ROBOT IS THE VISION, BUT NOT THE SAME ONE THAT WAS IN THE AVENGERS... NOT EXACTLY.


AND THAT WAREHOUSE THEY'RE ABOUT TO HIT ISN'T WHAT THEY THINK IT IS.
WHICH IS WHAT?
THEY THINK IT'S ONE OF STARK'S SECRET FACTORIES...THINK THEY CAN HIT IT AND IMPRESS THE BIG BOYS.
WHAT IS IT REALLY?
A HYDRA BASE.

WHAT? I'M SPENDING MY CHRISTMAS EVE DEFENDING HYDRA?
WHY NOT JUST LET THEM TAKE IT OUT?
IT'S COMPLICATED.

BUT LET'S JUST SAY YOU NEVER KNOW WHO'S WORKIN' FOR WHO IN THIS WORLD...
SO, HAVIN' A HYDRA BASE I KNOW THE LOCATION OF AND CAN MONITOR WHO COMES AND GOES FROM IT...
IT'S AN ASSET.
EXACTLY. ONE THAT'S GOING TO PAY OFF SOON, IF MY INFORMATION IS GOOD.
ALL RIGHT. I'VE GOT THIS, THEN.
THANKS. AN' I WON'T EVEN INSULT YOU BY REMINDING YOU NOT TO KILL 'EM.
YOU JUST DID.
AW, ME AND MY BIG MOUTH...

SO, HOW DO YOU WANT TO DO THIS, VISION?
IN A WAY THAT KEEPS US FROM BEING TOSSED IN STARK'S WHACKED-OUT INTERDIMENSIONAL PRISON, I'M HOPING?
AGREED. I'M FORMULATING A PLAN WHICH WILL DO MAXIMUM DAMAGE AND ALLOW US TO EXTRICATE OURSELVES EASILY.
THERE ARE THREE VARIABLES THAT I STILL NEED TO--
HEY...
...I WOULDN'T DO THAT IF I WERE YOU.
CORRECTION: FOUR VARIABLES.

HAWKEYE-- HIT HIM HIGH!
SURE, FOR STARTERS...
HEY!
HEY!

CHUFF
BONK
KATE!
YAAARRGH!

I BELIEVE HE IS TELLING THE TRUTH.
BUT WHAT INTEREST DOES NICK FURY HAVE IN THIS?
BECAUSE THIS PLACE ISN'T--
AH, DAMN IT.
HEY, WHAT'RE YOU--?

GUHH--
OH MY GOD...
YOU JUST...YOU... YOU...
KILLED A TERRORIST? YEAH.
BUT DON'T WORRY, THERE'LL BE TWO MORE TO TAKE HIS PLACE...
FURY, IT'S BLOWN...I HAD TO TAKE OUT A SENTRY.
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO NOW? YOU GOT A PLAN B?
ONLY ONE I EVER HAVE WITH HYDRA... BURN IT TO THE GROUND.

ALL RIGHT, BUT WE DO THIS FAST, AND YOU FOLLOW MY ORDERS...TO THE LETTER.
I JUST SAID WE WOULDN'T KILL ANYBODY.
THEN LET'S SERIOUSLY HOPE YOU DON'T HAVE TO.
BUT DON'T IMAGINE FOR A SECOND THAT HYDRA WILL HESITATE TO SNUFF YOU OUT, GIRL...
HEY, JUST ONE QUESTION BEFORE WE FOLLOW YOU INTO BATTLE...
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
NO ONE YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW, ELI...
OKAY...
LET'S DO THIS.

FURY'S RIGHT, AS USUAL...

...THE KIDS ARE GOOD. CLEARLY STEVE'S BEEN GIVING THEM POINTERS.

THEY COULD STILL USE MORE TRAINING...

...AND SOME FINE-TUNING OF THEIR TACTICAL TEAMWORK...

...BUT THEIR INSTINCTS ARE SHARP. THEY DON'T HESITATE...

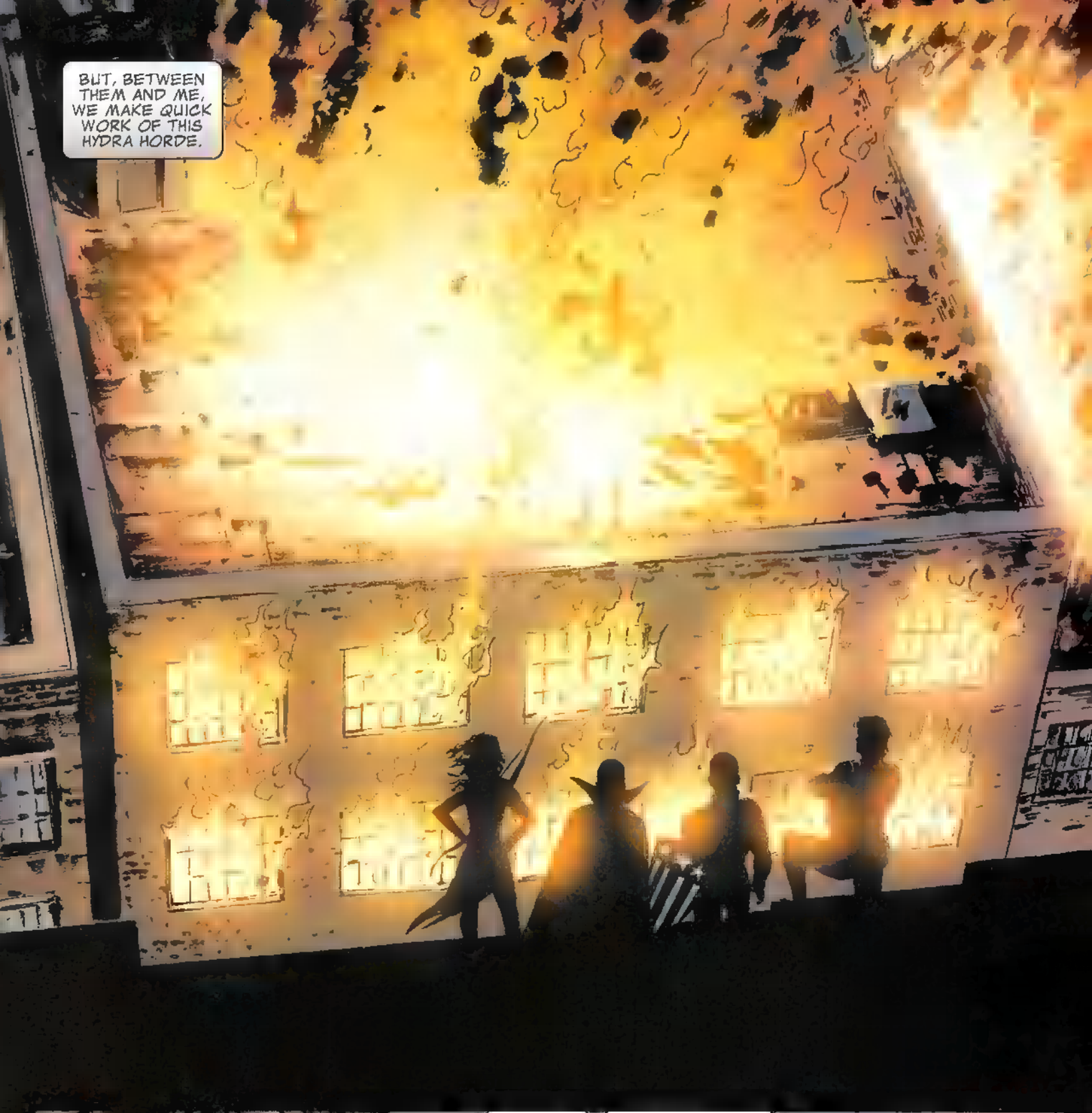
...AND THEY'RE *JUST* AFRAID ENOUGH TO *NOT* BE OVERCONFIDENT.

IT FEELS WEIRD TO BE THE ONE GIVING THE ORDERS LIKE THIS...
...AFTER SO MANY YEARS FOLLOWING THEM.

AND SO MANY MORE ON MY OWN...
...FLYING SOLO UNDERGROUND, WORKING FOR THE ENEMY.

NOW SUDDENLY I'M LEADING A TEAM OF KIDS INTO BATTLE AGAINST FASCIST TERRORISTS.

FURY WAS RIGHT ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE, TOO. THEY DO REMIND ME OF SOMEBODY...
...JUST NOT WHO HE THOUGHT.


BUT, BETWEEN THEM AND ME, WE MAKE QUICK WORK OF THIS HYDRA HORDE.

ALL RIGHT, KIDS. NOW VANISH...
...BEFORE S.H.I.E.L.D. AND MISS MARVEL SHOW UP TO REMIND YOU WHAT A BUNCH OF PANSIES HYDRA REALLY IS.
DID YOU SERIOUSLY JUST SAY PANSIES?

SERIOUSLY? WHAT CENTURY ARE YOU FROM?
THAT IS JUST SO INSENSITIVE. SOME OF OUR BEST FRIENDS ARE--
I MEANT WIMPS...

WHAT CAN I SAY? I'M NOT FROM AROUND HERE.

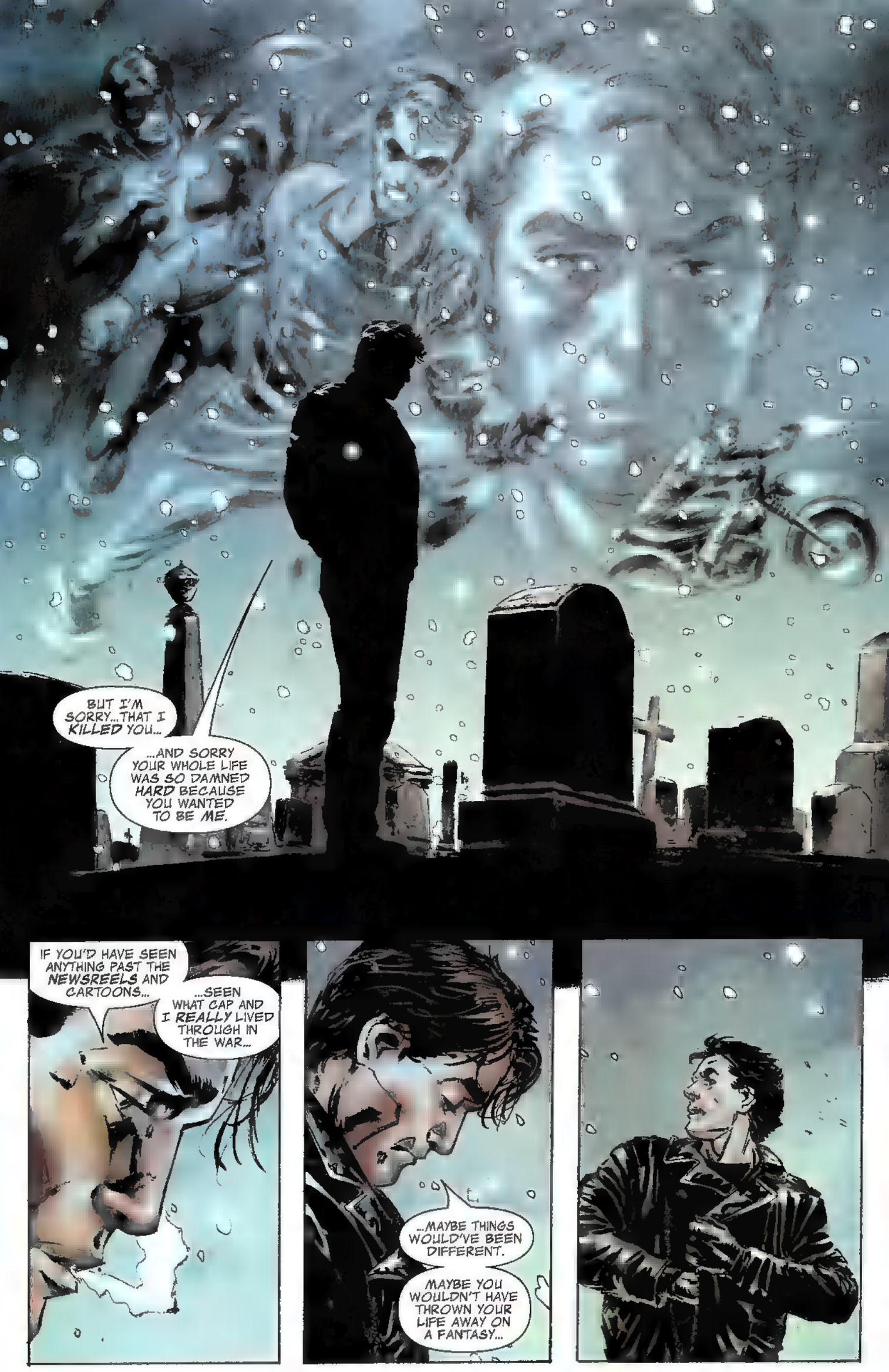
NOW GET MOVING...ALL OF YOU.
I'M NOT BAILING YOU OUT AGAIN.

HOW INTERESTING. I NEVER WOULD HAVE GUESSED.
WHAT?

I'VE JUST RUN A COMPARISON FACE AND COMBAT MOVEMENT ANALYSIS THROUGH THE OLD AVENGERS DATABASE...
...IN AN ATTEMPT TO ASCERTAIN THE IDENTITY OF OUR NEW FRIEND.

WHO?
WHO IS HE?

JACK
MONROE
DEC 7 1941
I DIDN'T KNOW WHO YOU WERE.
I KNOW THAT DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING...


BUT I'M SORRY...THAT I KILLED YOU...
...AND SORRY YOUR WHOLE LIFE WAS SO DAMNED HARD BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO BE ME.
IF YOU'D HAVE SEEN ANYTHING PAST THE NEWSREELS AND CARTOONS...
...SEEN WHAT CAP AND I REALLY LIVED THROUGH IN THE WAR...
...MAYBE THINGS WOULD'VE BEEN DIFFERENT.
MAYBE YOU WOULDN'T HAVE THROWN YOUR LIFE AWAY ON A FANTASY...

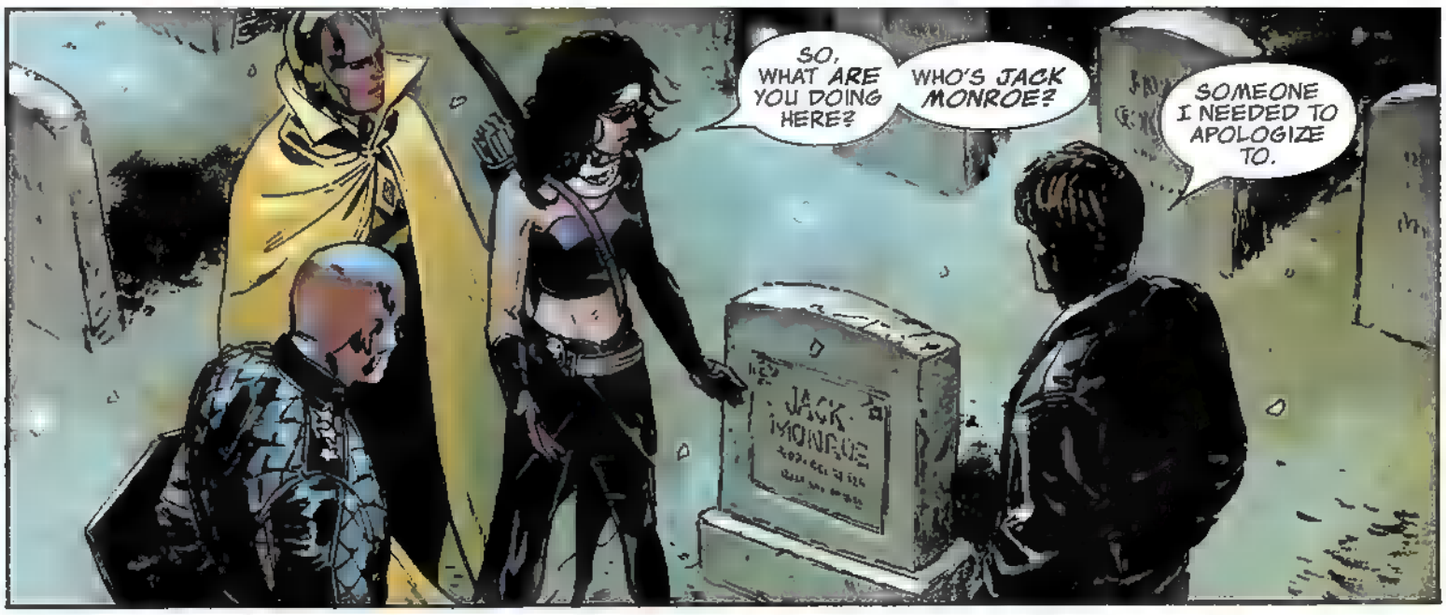
OKAY...

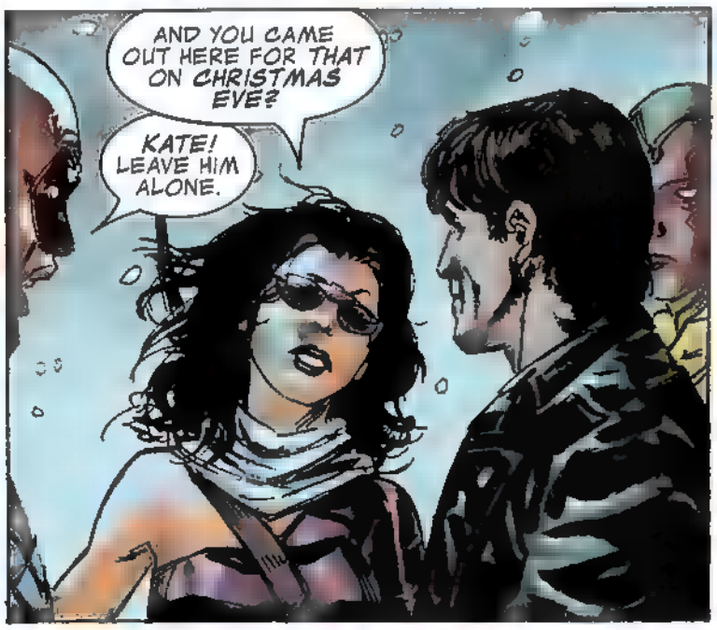
...NOW WHO'S OVER-REACTING?

YOU FOLLOWED ME? NO WAY.
I'D HAVE SPOTTED YOU.

YOU COULDN'T SPOT ME, I'M AFRAID, SIR.
YEAH... I GUESS NOT.
THAT STILL DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY YOU'RE HERE.
INTRUDING ON WHAT IS CLEARLY A PRIVATE MOMENT.
YEAH, WE... UH... WE DIDN'T REALIZE...
I MEAN, IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE, Y'KNOW?
WE THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO YOUR SECRET HIDEOUT, NOT...
I APOLOGIZE, SIR. IT'S MY FAULT.
I SHOULD HAVE KEPT IT TO MYSELF, SIR.
WHY IS HE CALLING ME "SIR"?
HE... WELL, THAT IS TO SAY, THE VISION HAS A DATABASE IN HIS HARD DRIVE.
THE AVENGERS DATABASE, LIKE, A BACKUP, FROM BEFORE... THE OLD AVENGERS... AND--
WE KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE, MR. BARNES.

NO, ELI...YOU DON'T.
LOOK, WE DIDN'T COME HERE TO INTRUDE, OR TO BUG YOU WITH QUESTIONS...
LIKE, YOU KNOW...WHY YOU'RE HERE, AND NOT DEAD...
WHICH WE REALLY WOULD LIKE TO KNOW.
WE JUST WANTED TO SAY SOMETHING TO YOU.
AND WHAT'S THAT?
IT WAS AN HONOR, BUCKY.
FOR ALL OF US.
MAN...I GUESS, UH... THANKS...


SO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WHO'S JACK MONROE?
SOMEONE I NEEDED TO APOLOGIZE TO.
JACK MONROE

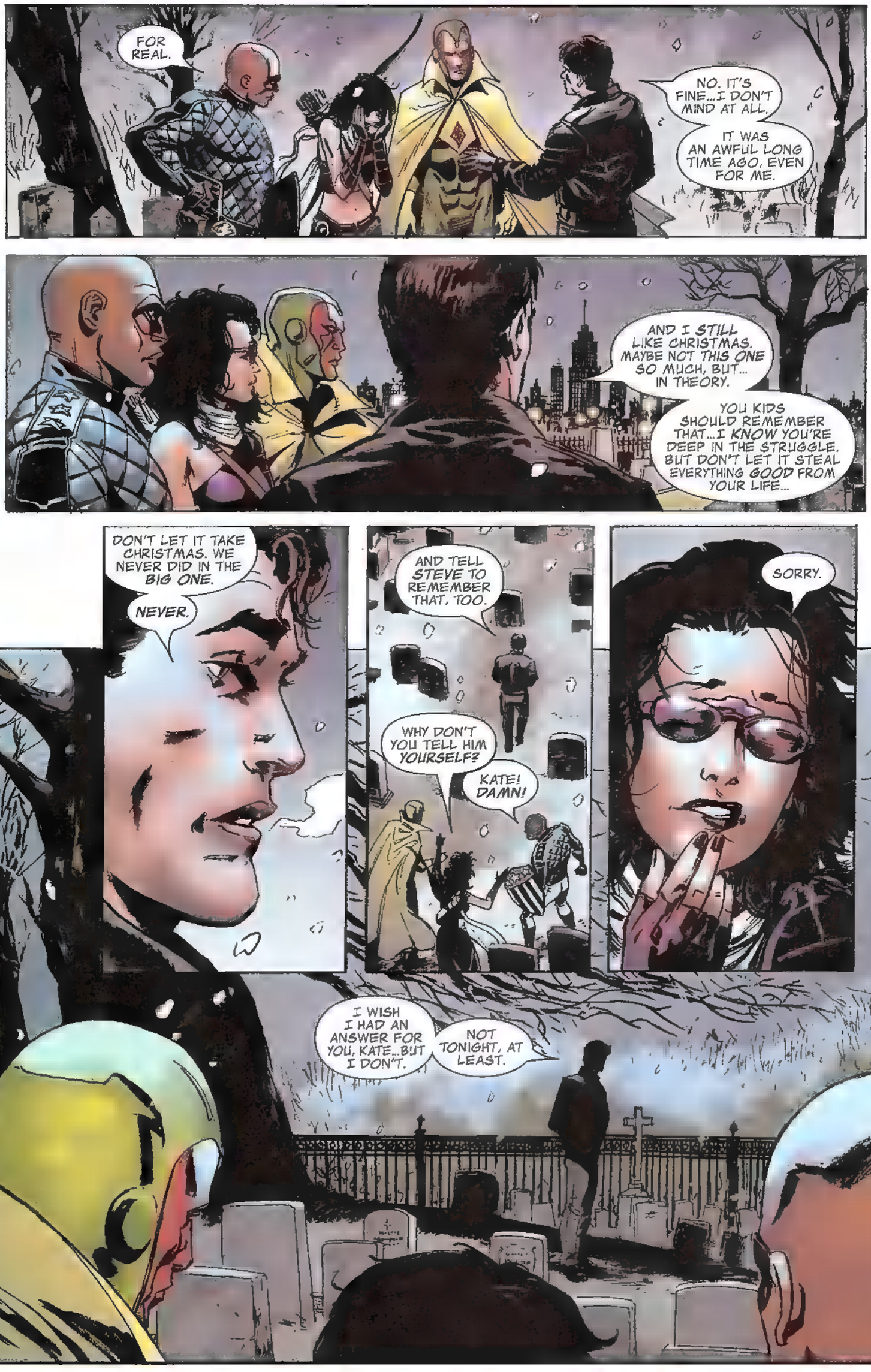

AND YOU CAME OUT HERE FOR THAT ON CHRISTMAS EVE?
KATE! LEAVE HIM ALONE.

IT'S OKAY...THAT, AT LEAST, I HAVE AN ANSWER FOR.
SEE...FOR ME, CHRISTMAS HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT LOOKING BACK...ON THE GOOD THINGS AND THE BAD.

THIS WAS ONE OF THE BAD...THE GOOD IS STILL TO COME.

THAT'S A WEIRD WAY TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS.
NOT MUCH WEIRDER THAN LEAPING AROUND ROOFTOPS LOOKING FOR BAD GUYS, BUT YEAH, IT'S DIFFERENT...
MY DAD DIED IN A TRAINING EXERCISE RIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS IN 1937, SO...

OH MY GOD...I AM JUST THE QUEEN OF NOT KNOWING WHEN TO SHUT UP TONIGHT.


FOR REAL.
NO. IT'S FINE...I DON'T MIND AT ALL.
IT WAS AN AWFUL LONG TIME AGO, EVEN FOR ME.
AND I STILL LIKE CHRISTMAS, MAYBE NOT THIS ONE SO MUCH, BUT... IN THEORY.
YOU KIDS SHOULD REMEMBER THAT...I KNOW YOU'RE DEEP IN THE STRUGGLE, BUT DON'T LET IT STEAL EVERYTHING GOOD FROM YOUR LIFE...
DON'T LET IT TAKE CHRISTMAS. WE NEVER DID IN THE BIG ONE.
NEVER.
AND TELL STEVE TO REMEMBER THAT, TOO.
WHY DON'T YOU TELL HIM YOURSELF?
KATE! DAMN!
SORRY.
I WISH I HAD AN ANSWER FOR YOU, KATE...BUT I DON'T.
NOT TONIGHT, AT LEAST.

THESE THINGS TAKE TIME! I CAN'T JUST MAKE A MOVE...
...SHE'LL THINK I'M A CREEP.
MERRY CHRISTMAS TO OUR BOYS!
DON'T BE A DOPE, TORO.
YOU'VE HAD YOUR EYE ON HER SINCE LAST CHRISTMAS, DON'T LET ANOTHER YEAR PASS YOU BY.
LAST CHRISTMAS? WHAT'RE YOU--
DON'T PLAY DUMB WITH ME, HOT STUFF.
I DON'T FORGET A REDHEAD LIKE THAT EITHER.

SHE'S-- SHE'S WAY OUT OF MY LEAGUE.
TORO...YOU CAN LIGHT YOURSELF ON FIRE AND FLY. YOU ARE A GENUINE HERO IN UNCLE SAM'S FIGHTING FORCES.
THERE ISN'T A WOMAN IN LONDON THAT'S OUTTA YOUR LEAGUE.
NOW GO!
HEY--
OH!
SORRY! SORRY ABOUT THAT--MY FRIEND...
ARE YOU GONNA ASK A GIRL TO DANCE, SOLDIER?
OR ARE YOU JUST GONNA GAZE AT HER ALL NIGHT?

NO, I JUST DECIDED YOU WERE RIGHT, AND THAT I DESERVED A NIGHT OFF...
IT IS CHRISTMAS, AFTER ALL.
THE WAR WILL STILL BE THERE.
WOW.
STEVE ROGERS DECIDES TO HAVE FUN...
...IT'S NOT JUST CHRISTMAS...IT'S A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE.
STOP. I HAVE FUN.
WHEN?
REMEMBER WHEN I PUNCHED HITLER? THAT WAS FUN.
YEAH, OKAY.

ALRIGHT, BROTHER, C'MON...GRAB A PARTNER. I'VE GOT A PLAN.
WHAT IS IT?
SEE THAT MISTLETOE OVER THERE, BY THE BAR?
YEAH.

WELL, WE'RE GONNA MAKE SURE TORO AND HIS LITTLE RED-HAIRED GIRL END UP UNDER IT.
HE MAY HAVE LEFT A BOY, BUT DAMN IT, HE'S COMING HOME A MAN.

YOU'RE LATE.
I KNOW. I GOT HELD UP. SORRY.
WHEN I RECEIVED FURY'S MESSAGE, I TOOK IT FOR A POORLY CONCEIVED JOKE.
THEN WHY ARE YOU HERE?
BECAUSE I HAVE NO SENSE OF HUMOR ABOUT SOME THINGS.
BUT NOW I SEE IT REALLY IS YOU.
HMMPF.
THE YEARS HAVE BEEN KIND.
THAT'S A MATTER OF OPINION.
AND A WHOLE OTHER TOPIC OF DISCUSSION.

BUT THANKS FOR SHOWING UP, AND FOR NOT ASKING A LOT OF QUESTIONS.
I'VE HAD MY OWN EXPERIENCES WITH MISSING TIME, BOY.
I HAVE NO NEED TO LISTEN TO YOU RECOUNT YOURS.
YOU KNOW WHAT, NAMOR? IT'S REALLY GOOD TO SEE YOU.
GOOD TO KNOW NOT EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED.
ENOUGH OF THESE PLEASANTRIES.
AND IF YOU ATTEMPT TO GIVE ME A CRISS-MASS PRESENT, I WILL BREAK YOUR ARMS.
I SWEAR, I'M ONLY PACKING HEAT.
THEN I'M NOT UNHAPPY THAT YOU'RE NOT DEAD.
YOU'VE SEEN THE GRAVE?

JUST NOW, YEAH... IT'S NICE... I GUESS.
FOR A GRAVE.
THOMAS "TORO" RAYMOND
BELOVED SON AND HUSBAND
WAR HERO
IT'S A PALTRY TRIBUTE. HE DESERVES MORE.
SO, I HEAR THAT YOU WERE THERE... WHEN HE...
...WHEN TORO WAS KILLED.
IT WAS LONG AGO, BUT I HAD THAT HONOR.
HOW DID IT HAPPEN? DO YOU MIND TELLING ME?
HOW DID HE DIE?
AS HE WOULD HAVE WANTED TO...LIKE A HERO.
WOULD YOU TELL ME ABOUT IT? WOULD YOU DO THAT FOR ME?
IT'S NOT A SHORT STORY.
NAMOR, SERIOUSLY...
...I'VE GOT NOWHERE ELSE TO BE.
The End